

and violates their international treaty responsibilities. But, most importantly, they jeopardize the continued employment of thousands of Americans in my congressional district and around the Nation whose jobs depend upon a fair and open market.

EVEN PRESIDENT CLINTON
PRAISES 104TH CONGRESS

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, the 104th Congress has truly been the most significant Congress in over 40 years. When the people of this great Nation voted on November 8, 1994 to finally change Government as we know it, the 104th Congress responded. Mr. Speaker, not only has there been news pieces, editorials, and commentaries supporting the superb accomplishments of this Republican controlled Congress throughout this country, but our own President, Democrat Bill Clinton states, and I quote, "You guys did such a great job. It's amazing how much you've got done in the last few weeks. You should really be proud." And proud we are, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly mention some of the major accomplishments. Welfare as we have known it is no longer a guarantee of assistance, workers who change jobs will be assured of continued health coverage, mothers will no longer be forced out of hospitals after they bring new life into this world as they were in the past, we have relieved small businesses of excessive tax burdens while increasing the minimum wage to enable millions of American workers to bring home more pay. Mr. Speaker, this Congress promised to get tough on crime and we did just that. For example, crimes committed against our elderly and children are no longer tolerated; environmental protection acts like the Safe Drinking Water Act, along with legislation to overhaul pesticide regulations. I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker.

The 104th Congress has done such a great job, 7 items of our Contract of America have been signed into law by President Clinton. And this is nothing new, Mr. Speaker. The President has been campaigning on our issues and beliefs all year now. You see, Mr. Speaker, President Clinton figures if you can't beat 'em, you might as well join 'em.

At this time I commend to you an article that appeared in the Albany Times-Union about the achievements of this Congress.

104TH CONGRESS IS HISTORY

(By Elaine S. Povich)

WASHINGTON.—The Senate approved an important aviation safety and spending bill Thursday, breaking a Democratic-led filibuster over a labor issue, and wrapped up business of the watershed 104th Congress for the fall campaigns.

The Congress, the first in 40 years to be controlled by Republicans, ended as it began: with partisan wrangling. The immediate battle was over a Federal Aviation Administration bill that Democrats, led by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., said contained a special provision making it more difficult for Federal Express employees to unionize. After the filibuster was broken with a 66-31 vote (six more than the number needed), the bill passed easily, 92-2.

"This is special-interest legislation that never would have been passed by a Democratic House and a Democratic Senate," Kennedy maintained. "We look forward today to the next vote for working families, which is Nov. 5 (Election Day)."

But the provision for Federal Express, which would require its employees to organize nationally rather than locally, was supported both by Democrats and Republicans. Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., the provision's main champion, said Kennedy was trying to give the bill the "bum's rush."

The urgency of many senators to get home to campaign, along with the fact that the bill contained millions for airport construction projects, contributed to the lopsided vote.

The White House had notified the senators that President Clinton opposed the Federal Express provision. Thursday, however, aides indicated that Clinton would sign the bill, which the House approved last week.

"Because of this legislation, criminal-background checks can now be conducted on airport personnel, new explosives-detection technology can be deployed, baggage will be checked in more thoroughly, passenger profiling will be instituted, and the families who lose a loved one in an accident will be able to get the help they need," Clinton said in a statement.

The bill includes several anti-terrorism provisions for airports, including stepped-up security. Some of the requirements include background checks on airport-security personnel and provisions aimed at dealing more humanely with families of air-crash victims.

The bill also streamlines the FAA, beefing up the regulatory aspects of the agency and phasing out the air-travel promotional functions.

Also on the Senate's last-minute agenda was a major federal parks bill that passed on a voice vote after days of wrangling over boundary lines in 100 individual federal parks.

Legislation to increase penalties for misuse of the so-called "date-rape drug" cleared the Senate and was virtually certain to win final congressional approval.

The Senate acted by voice vote to control use of Rohypnol. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Gerald Solomon (R-Queensbury), must return to the House, where a slightly different version was approved last week, 421-1.

Rohypnol is a tranquilizer that has no taste, order or color when dissolved in a drink and is 10 to 20 times more powerful than Valium. In "roone rape," victims who are slipped the drug become dizzy and disoriented and have trouble moving their arms and legs. Ultimately, they pass out and have little or no memory.

After clearing up the last-minute items, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Mass., and Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., made the traditional telephone call to Clinton to announce that this session of Congress had concluded its business.

"We've got good news for you," Lott told Clinton. They discussed bills Congress had passed over the past few weeks.

"You guys did such a great job," Clinton said. "It's amazing how much you've got done in the last few weeks. You should really be proud."

KEY LEGISLATION

Some of the major bills passed by the 104th Congress:

Welfare: The longstanding federal guarantee of assistance to every person who qualifies will end, to be replaced by state programs financed partially by federal grants. Eligibility for welfare generally will be limited to five years. Food stamps, aid to legal immigrants will be scaled back considerably.

Health: Workers who change jobs will be assured continued health coverage without a waiting period for pre-existing conditions. Insurers will have to pay for at least 48 hours' hospital care for newborns and their mothers and provide higher benefits for mental-health care.

Taxes: No across-the-board tax reduction, although targeted cuts were approved for adoption expenses, long-term health care, helping small businesses bear the cost of raising the minimum wage and helping the self-employed buy health insurance.

Minimum wage: The \$4.25-an-hour federal minimum wage will rise in two steps to \$5.15.

Speed limit: The 55 mph federal speed limit was repealed.

Crime: More money for police on the street. Limitation of appeals in death-penalty cases. Tougher penalties for crimes against the elderly and children. Interstate stalking was made a federal crime.

Environment: A new standard restricts cancer-causing pesticides in fresh and processed foods and also targets residues that raise the risk of birth defects. A new Safe Drinking Water Act zeros in on pollutants posing the greatest risk to health.

Telecommunications: A major overhaul allows local telephone companies to enter the long-distance business; big gas and electric companies will be able to offer telecommunications services. A "V-chip" eventually will screen TV programs for violence and adult-oriented content.

Gay marriages: States will be allowed to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages. No federal spousal benefits will be available in such marriages.

HONORING HELEN MILLER

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 4, 1996

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the people of Dade County recently lost one of our hardest-working and most-loved citizens. Helen L. Miller, most recently vice-mayor of the city of Opa-Locka, passed away on Tuesday, October 2, 1996.

Mrs. Miller dedicated her life to the service of our community. She served in almost every position of leadership in the city government. The improvements she made in the lives of the citizens of Opa Locka made her one of the most prominent and respected members of the community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues an article from the Miami Herald detailing the remarkable life and many accomplishments of Helen Miller. Her life is an inspiration and example to everyone in public service.

[From the Miami Herald, Oct. 3, 1996]

HELEN MILLER, WHO "PUT OPA-LOCKA ON MAP," DIES

(By Marika Lynch)

Opa-locka legend Helen Miller, Florida's first black female mayor and the city's current vice mayor, died of an apparent heart attack early Wednesday at Parkway Regional Medical Center. She was 71.

Mayor to some, and "momms" to others, Miller was one month short of her political retirement after 13 years on the Opa-locka dais. But in her many roles on state and local boards, including a stint in 1995 as president of the Dade league of Cities, Miller's influence spread beyond the North Dade city.